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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-ninth session

REPORT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING
OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
(8 December 1998)

1. The meeting was opened by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, His Excellency, Ambassador Victor Rodriguez Cedeño (Venezuela).
2. The Chairman informed delegations that the meeting was being convened in order to review the arrangements for the observer participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the work of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee in 1998 and to consider an extension of these arrangements. He reminded delegations of the decision adopted by the Standing Committee at its eighth meeting in June 1997, whereby the arrangements for NGO observer participation should be reviewed after a trial period of one year. To assist delegations in their review, a *Review of Non-Governmental (NGO) Participation in the Work of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee* (EC/49/SC/CRP.1) was before the Standing Committee, which included in annex a draft decision on the extension of these arrangements.
3. In commenting on the draft decision, one delegation expressed concern about the "Advocacy Project" during the forty-ninth plenary session of the Executive Committee, which produced a daily publication ("On the Record") of the proceedings and related issues. Delegations were assured that this project would not be extended to the private meetings of the Standing Committee, and were informed that no decision had been made on the repetition of this project at the next plenary session of the Executive Committee. In other comments, delegations expressed support for a continuation of the arrangements for NGO observer participation in the work of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee in the years 1999 and 2000.
4. The Standing Committee adopted the draft decision attached to EC/49/SC/CRP.1 (annex).

Decision adopted by the Extraordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee
(8 December 1998)

Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) observer participation in the work
of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's programme
and its Standing Committee

The Standing Committee,

Recalling its decision on observer participation in the work of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee (A/AC.96/888), and having completed the first year of NGO observer participation,

(a) Recognizes the contribution of NGOs as important partners in UNHCR's humanitarian work on behalf of refugees;

(b) Decides that:

- i) The decision endorsing the observer participation of NGOs will be extended for the years of 1999 and 2000;
- ii) The participation of NGOs as observers will continue to follow the procedure established by the Standing Committee decision (A/AC.96/888);

(c) Further decides that these arrangements will be reviewed after fifty-first Executive Committee session.